Flashback

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Volume 61, Number 3, Fall 2011

Washington County Historical Society

118 East Dickson Street, Fayetteville, AR 72701

http://www.washcohistoricalsociety.org

http://www.headquartershouse.org

Flashback (ISSN: 0428-5573) is published quarterly in the spring, summer, fall, and winter as an official publication of the Washington County Historical Society. Send all materials for publication to: *Flashback* Editor, Washington County Historical Society, 118 East Dickson Street, Fayetteville, AR 72701.

There is no payment for articles published in *Flashback*. The editor retains the right to edit all submitted articles prior to publication.

Society membership is invited to those interested in preservation of Washington County history. Annual dues for categories of members are: Senior, Student, Public Library, $15; General, $25; Trail Blazer, $50; Explorer $100; Wagon Master, $250; Pioneer, $500; Statesman, $1,000; Empire Builder, $5,000.

Members are mailed *Flashback* each quarter. Available past issues are $6 each, postpaid. Add $1 postage for issues printed in 1951 through February 1972. Web site: washcohistoricalsociety.org or headquartershouse.org.

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FLASHBACK

Journal of the Washington County Historical Society
Preserving the Past for the Future

Volume 61 Fall 2011 Number 3

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Photo by Charlie Alison

On the cover: A cove of Lake Fayetteville, built in 1949-1950 as a reservoir to supply drinking water to Fayetteville, it's now the premier recreational park among the city's several dozen parks.

Fifth Annual Lemke Prize Competition Open for Submissions

The Washington County Historical Society announces the fifth annual Walter J. Lemke Prize competition. Anyone interested in Washington County history, whether a professional or amateur historian, is encouraged to enter. Topics can be on any phase of Washington County's history or archaeology, deal with an individual or institution connected with the county, and can address any time period.

The winning article will receive $300; Second prize receives $200. Both winners receive framed certificates. Winners will be recognized at the annual Ice Cream Social in August 2012.

Manuscripts will be judged on their contribution to the expansion of the county's history; the originality of the subject; and, the use of primary and secondary sources. The manuscripts must be original material, and not have been previously published; no more than 40 pages, typed, and double-spaced. Footnotes should be included on separate, double-spaced pages, although they do not count toward the 40-page limit. The title page should contain the heading "WALTER J. LEMKE PRIZE," the full title of the manuscript, the author's name, mailing address, telephone number, and e-mail address.

Entries become the property of the Washington County Historical Society and will not be returned to the author. All papers will be considered for publication in the *Flashback*. The Society reserves the right to award one or no prizes.

Copies of all entries in the Lemke Prize will be deposited with the Special Collections Department at the University of Arkansas Libraries. Entries may be mailed to Lemke Prize, Washington County Historical Society, 118 E. Dickson Street, Fayetteville, AR 72701, or e-mailed to charlie.alison@gmail.com by June 30, 2012. If the entries are e-mailed, a preferred format is Microsoft Word but other software formats will be considered.

For additional information on the Walter J. Lemke Prize, please contact the editor, Charlie Alison, at the above mailing address, at 575-6731 or at charlie.alison@gmail.com.

The History of Lake Fayetteville

By H. David Chapman

EDITOR'S NOTE: This article is the winner of the 2011 Walter J. Lemke Prize, awarded annually by the Washington County Historical Society for the best historical article submitted for publication in Flashback each year.

Lake Fayetteville was created by constructing a dam across Clear Creek in 1949. Although the lake was originally intended as a municipal water source, the creation of Beaver Lake rendered this use redundant. Today the lake and surrounding parkland are used for educational and leisure activities, and its facilities are utilized by thousands of people all year round. The park has undergone constant change since its inception and it is to be hoped that any future developments do not compromise its present role as a "green lung" for the citizens of Fayetteville and Springdale. The history of the area before construction of the dam and its development as a public park is described.

Lake Fayetteville lies between the cities of Fayetteville and Springdale. The park comprises 448 acres of land surrounding 194 acres of water. Amenities include a boat dock and fishing pier, softball complex, disc golf course, volleyball courts, pavilions and children's play areas, numerous walking and cycling trails, an environmental center for aquatic resources, and a recent addition, the Botanical Garden of the Ozarks.

Early Settlement

The first recorded settlers to occupy land that is now Lake Fayetteville Park were Wilson Damron (1836), heirs of Robert Cavness (1836), James Hubbard (1838), Spencer F. Fine (1838),

and Elijah Lee (1839). Other early landowners were John Lindley (1840), John Francisco (1847), Joseph Dickson (1851), Nelson Hewitt (1855), and Peter Varner (1857). Their landholdings are illustrated in handwritten entries in the Plat Book of Original Entries[1] and the Abstract of Original Entries Lands[2] held in the Washington County Archives and are illustrated in a diagram of the plat map below.

Fine was the largest landowner who was granted property

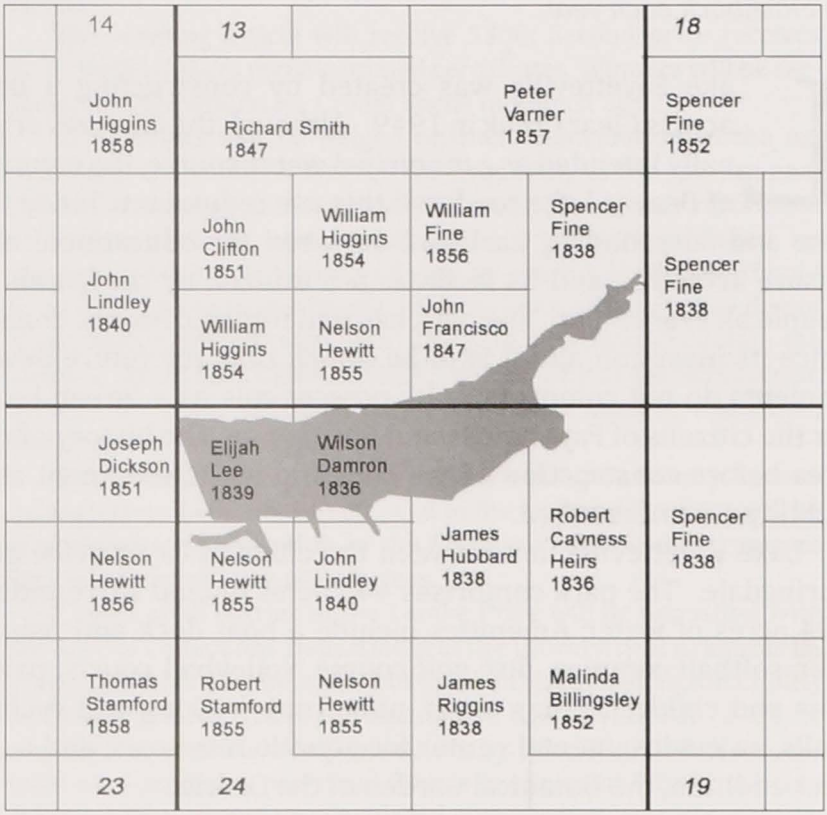


Illustration by Thilak Rathinam

A map based on the Plat Book of Original Entries and the Abstract of Original Entries Lands shows land owners in Township 17-N Range 30 and 29W, with a gray overlay showing the outline of present-day Lake Fayetteville.

in the northern and eastern sections of the present-day park including the old fields east of Powell Road and west of Old Missouri Road. His obituary[3] states that he was one of the pioneers of Washington County and was at one time one of the best known and wealthiest men in it. Business reverses and bad health took his fortune away and for two years he was forced to subsist on the public bounty.[4] He died in the county poorhouse at the age of 86. Nelson Hewitt was another early settler who lived to the age

Courtesy of Special Collections, University of Arkansas Libraries

By 1894, when the Atlas Map of Washington County was published by G.V. Shelton, a large portion of property in the upper right of this map was owned by T.A. Henson, fields that are being restored to prairie within Lake Fayetteville Park.

of 76. His obituary states that "his course through life has been the most consistent for honesty and fair dealing --- his death is a great loss to the community. None stood higher in the respects of the people."[5]

By 1894, the Atlas Map of Washington County, shown on the preceding page, indicates that T.A. Henson owned fields west of Old Missouri Road, now being restored to prairie.[6] Property along Clear Creek was owned by D.A. Bridenthal, J.S. Bookout, T.J. Bridenthal, and J.D. Skillern. Other landowners were J. H. Riggins, H. Eidson, and Mrs. E.C. Cardwell. The Plat Book of Washington County shows that by 1908 the Henson and Skillern properties had passed on to their descendants, S. C. Henson Est. and N. & E. Skillern.[7]

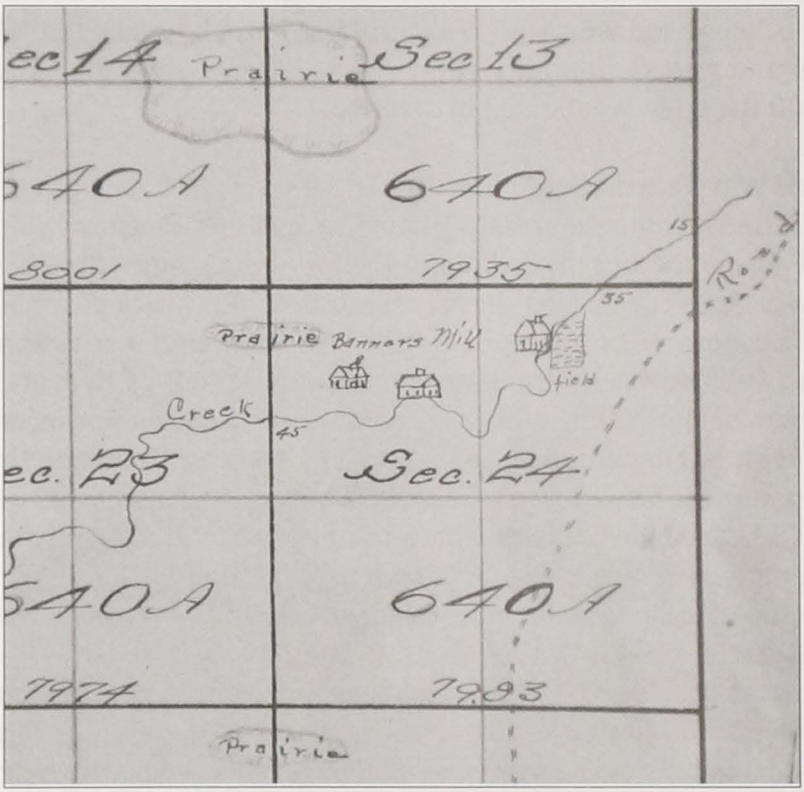
Dameron's Mill

One of the earliest mills in Washington County existed north of Fayetteville on Clear Creek. A map drawn by Velda Brotherton shows the "road to Dameron's Mill," now Turner Street, running south from Caudle Street in Springdale.[8] The mill is identified in a map of Township Plats from Field Notes of Washington County[9] (Township 17 North Range 30 West Sec. 24) dated from the 1830s. It shows Clear Creek, prairies, an old road to the southeast, a field and other buildings. This section of the map is illustrated on the next page.

The mill can also be seen on the Langtree map of Washington County dated 1848 (published in 1866).[10] Bobbie Byers Lynch wrote an article in *Flashback* on the early mills of Washington County and, according to her, the mill is described in field notes dating from surveys conducted from 1831 to 1834.[11] The notes state that the mill lies "east on a random line between Sec. 13 and 24, a house to the right, Damern's mill to the right about 15 chains on Clear Creek and house to the right about 15 chains small field east of the house." Based upon these coordinates, Duane Woltjen believes that the mill was located on property about one third to one half of the lake's length east of the dam.

The mill is identified as "Banners Mill" in the Township Plat

map below, but Lynch believes this to be a copy error and that the correct name is Dameron. This may be so, but it also seems plausible that Banner could be the name of a previous owner. Different spellings of Dameron are recorded in various documents. Thus in the Plat Book of Original Entries and the Abstract of Original Entries the name is written as Wilson N. Damron.[12] The 1829 Sheriff's Census of Washington County lists a Wilson N. Damson but in the Index this is spelled "Damron."[13] Family



Courtesy of Special Collections, University of Arkansas Libraries

A township plat based on field notes from the 1830s shows a "Banners Mill" on Clear Creek as well as portions of prairie, two nearby buildings, and a cultivated field and road to the east. The mill was known locally as Dameron's Mill, although spelling of the name varied. Whether Banner preceded Dameron or was simply a mistake is unknown.

Maps of Washington County[14] spells the name Damrow. Lynch states that in 1838 Wilson N. Damon and his wife Jane sold the property at NE of NW of Sec. 24, Twp. 17, R. 30 to their neighbor, Elijah Lee. Lee was a farmer and miller, and one of the first members of Shiloh (Springdale) Baptist Church. The log church was burnt in the civil war.[15]

In 1894 and 1908 T.J. Bridenthal (also spelled Breidenthal) owned this land. T.J. Bridenthal was the son of D.A. Bridenthal who owned property further to the west. Lynch records that Frank Johnson remembers the mill being known as Breidenthal mill; "when Johnson was a boy, his father took him to the mill site and part of the foundation was still there, sometime after 1900 the mill was allowed to deteriorate."[16]

Civil War Veterans

The Washington County Historical Society's quarterly journal *Flashback* and the *History of Washington County*[17] have several articles concerning these early settlers. Rothrock describes the adventures of Thomas Andrew Henson, a civil war veteran who enlisted in the Union army.[18] A photograph of Henson is shown below.[19] During the war northwest Arkansas was infested with bands of bushwhackers and cutthroats; to escape this Henson sent his family to the comparative safety of Missouri. In 1865 he brought his family back to northwest Arkansas, traveling on the stagecoach route known as Old Missouri Road. They passed over land where "the head" of Lake Fayetteville is now and his wife Sarah 'Callie' Henson said "I want this farm! --- I want to live here". "There was a big spring where the stagecoaches used to stop --- that became known as Henson Springs." Unfortunately, no source is provided for this romantic story, which was presumably recounted to Rothrock by one of Henson's descendants. The present location of Henson Springs is unknown. The *History of Washington County* has a description of the Henson family written by Thomas Henson's great-great-granddaughter, Linda Lilly. Henson was a good business man who traded in livestock and land, when he died in 1885 he was

a large landowner with 1,700 acres. Research by Judith Woltjen has provided further details of the Henson family. At 25 years of age, Thomas 'Andy' Henson, already a widower, married Sarah

Photo courtesy of the Shiloh Museum of Ozark History

Thomas Andrew Henson

Caroline Gregg. The Gregg and Henson families lived near Oxford Bend, located on the White river four miles east of Fayetteville. Both families were recent migrants, Henson being born in Tennessee and Callie's father, Albert G. Gregg, in Alabama. Albert Gregg was the first postmaster of Shiloh at Lynch's Prairie Post Office, which was established in 1859. A photograph of the post office is reproduced in *Springdale; the Courage of Shiloh*.[20] Gregg enlisted in the Confederate army and died at the battle of Clinton in Missouri in 1863. The post office was closed with the start of the civil war.

About 1869, another civil war veteran John Solomon Bookout moved with his family to northwest Arkansas and built a large house and blacksmith shop near the "excellent spring which fed Clear Creek."[21] The 1894 Atlas Map indicates that his property was located between land owned by D. A. Bridenthal to the west and T. J. Bridenthal to the east. Farm houses can be seen on these properties north of Clear Creek.[22] Bookout

Photo courtesy of the Shiloh Museum of Ozark History

The Bookout family, which lived north of present-day Lake Fayetteville.

moved to this location because he had married David Bridenthal's daughter, who was not a strong woman and needed help looking after the children. While a soldier, Bookout had learned the trade of a blacksmith and had travelled in northwest Arkansas. A photograph taken about 1911 shows the family standing outside a timber home located "near the N. W. Arkansas Mall on Clear Creek land, now under Lake Fayetteville."[23] John Bookout is dressed in black and has a long white beard; his daughter told of a cabin on the hillside where he stayed alone when his wife or children displeased him.

David Bridenthal was another Civil War veteran who had enlisted in the Confederate army. He came to Washington County in 1866 and founded a school, Clear Creek Academy, shortly after the war.[24] The academy building was south of Lake Fayetteville near Mud Creek. Dr. E. F. Ellis remembers attending the academy as a boy and carrying drinking water from Bridenthal Springs, a quarter of a mile north of Lake Fayetteville. A Clear Creek Academy reunion was held in 1899 and a photograph in *Flashback*

Photo by H. David Chapman

A springhouse near Lokomotion, west of the Lake Fayetteville Dam.

shows David Bridenthal with his students who, among others, included Ellis, and members of the Henson family. Ellis evidently acquired part of Bridenthal's property because in 1942 he sold 112 acres to Med Cashion.[25] Cashion paid "about $100 an acre," which he considered not too high a price because the land had a "highway frontage, had several springs on it and was well situated." He then sold land to the city for construction of the dam. The location of Bridenthal Springs is not known but a spring underlies a derelict building on private property near the amusement business Lokomotion and a spring with a spring house and water enclosure can be seen at the base of the hillside nearby.

William Cardwell once owned a considerable amount of land between Lake Fayetteville and Zion road.[26] However, the Family Maps and Atlas Map of Washington County indicate that the property was to the east of Old Missouri Road. This may have been purchased from grants allocated to veterans of the war of 1812. Although fortunes of the family declined, their descendants held onto the land until recent times.

Butterfield Trail

From 1858-1861, the Butterfield Overland Mail Route connected Fayetteville to the Missouri state line, running along the Old Missouri Post Road, by way of Lake Fayetteville and present day Arkansas Highway 265 to Caudle Street in Springdale. Much has been written about this trailblazing route, which operated between St. Louis and San Francisco with stagecoaches passing through Fayetteville three times a week.[27] J.H. Van Hoose recounts that the well known "toot toot" of Charlie Butterfield's stage horn was heard at the upper end of College Avenue as the big Concord coach, drawn by four large steeds, entered town.[28] The Old Missouri Post Road can be seen on the 1894 and 1908 maps and its route is evident on the 1830s map of Washington County (see illustrations on pages 85 and 87). The route can still be seen in the old fields at the east end of Lake Fayetteville Park. The Lake Fayetteville section is among a very few surviving segments of the original trail that have not been paved or developed

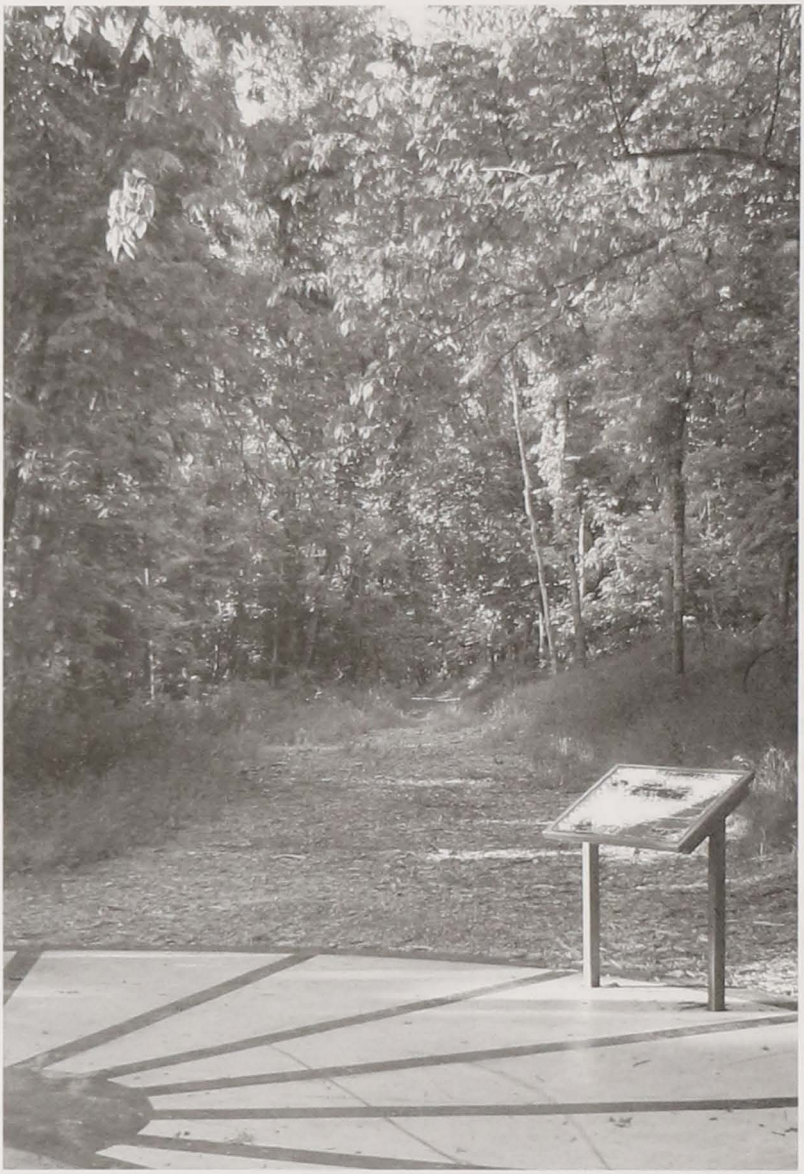


Photo by H. David Chapman

The city of Fayetteville built a small plaza with a historical plaque at the intersection of the Lake Fayetteville Trail and the original path of the Butterfield Overland Mail Route, seen here running north toward Springdale.

Photo by H. David Chapman

The Wells-Fargo Company, a financial partner in the Butterfield Overland Mail Co., donated two chairs for use at the plaza commemorating the route used by Butterfield during the late 1850s that passed though present-day Lake Fayetteville Park.

for other purposes. The Butterfield Overland Mail Route, Fayetteville Segments Historic District, was listed in the National Register of Historic Places on June 18, 2009. In March 2010, the city restored the northern section of the trail by removing overgrowth and brush and erecting a wagon wheel plaza with a commemorative plaque.

Landscape Before the Dam

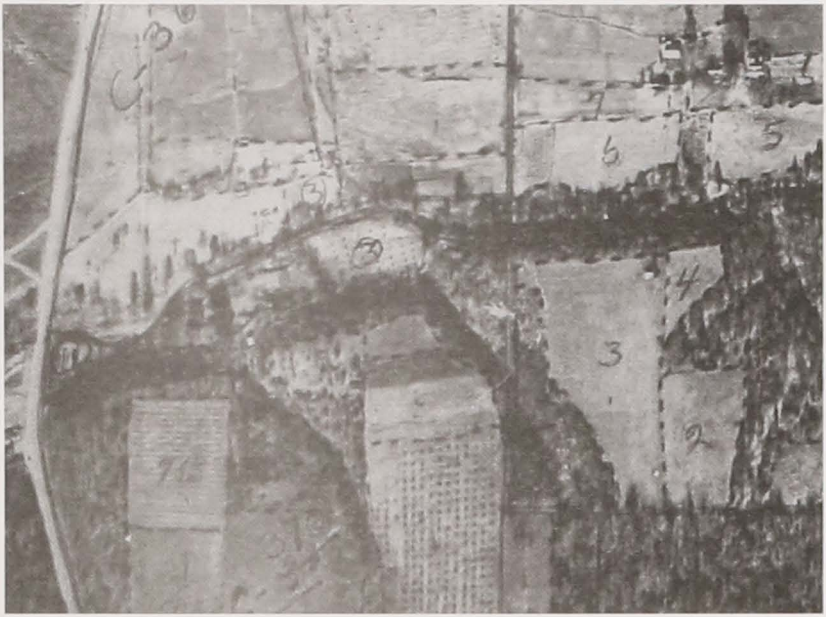
An impression of the Lake Fayetteville area prior to construction of the dam can be obtained from an aerial photograph dated November 26, 1941.[29] This shows Clear Creek and its tributaries fringed by trees and a forested hillside to the northeast. Various farm buildings can be made out, but otherwise the landscape is

open fields and the occasional orchard. Highway 71B (opened in 1930) followed the line of an earlier route. Springdale's Turner Street and a section of Old Missouri Road running in a north-south direction to the east can be seen. The photograph also shows a road south of Clear Creek following the route of present day Zion. In 1941 Lake Fayetteville Road, Lake Road, and Lakeview Drive did not exist and Powell Road was a farm track. It is clear from the photograph that the construction of Lake Fayetteville inundated the gently sloping fields to the north of Clear Creek.

The old fields north of the Environmental Center contain remnants of prairie grassland that, for purposes of restoration, the Fayetteville Natural Heritage Association has designated Units 1, 2, and 3 from west to east respectively. Research un-

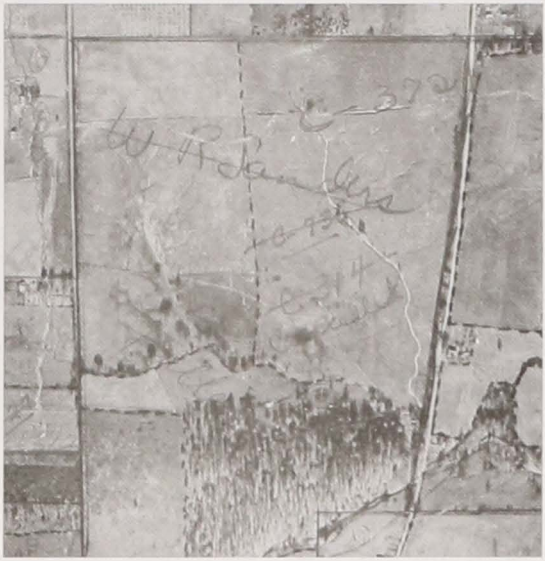
Photo courtesy of Special Collections, University of Arkansas Libraries

An aerial photo, AWE-4C-8, taken on Nov. 26, 1941, shows the valley of Clear Creek and surrounding properties prior to the creation of Lake Fayetteville.



Photos courtesy of Special Collections, University of Arkansas Libraries

An enlargement of the 1941 aerial photo shows the site at which the Lake Fayetteville Dam would be built (above) and the open fields of the northeast portion of the park (below) that are being restored as prairie.



dertaken by Judith Woltjen has established the ownership of these tracts of land. Originally owned by Stephen Fine, by 1908 all three units were owned by S.C. Henson Estates. By 1949, Units 1 and 2 were owned by J. McCoy, W.R. & V. Sanders and the area crossed by the Butterfield Stage Route was owned by B.B. Brogdon. In recognition of the Henson connection, Fayetteville Natural Heritage Association has recommended that the fields be known as "Callie's Prairie."

An impression of the area before completion of the lake can be obtained from a postcard printed in the 1940s that shows a view looking south on Highway 71 near the entrance of the present day Mall. It shows a rural scene of farmland and woodlots, a far cry from the five and six lanes of traffic in the present day commercial district.

A City Reservoir

The development of the Fayetteville water system has been

Photo courtesy of Special Collections, University of Arkansas Libraries

A postcard depicting U.S. Highway 71 on the north side of Fayetteville gives a bucolic impression of how the area around present-day Lake Fayetteville looked during the 1940s, prior to construction of the Northwest Arkansas Mall and the advent of five- and six-lane highways.

documented in the *Fayetteville Daily Democrat* and *Northwest Arkansas Times*, and reviewed in a series of articles by Fred Coggan in the latter and more recently by Steve Erwin in *Flashback*.[30] The original source of water for Fayetteville was the West Fork of the White River where an extraction plant had been constructed in 1894, nevertheless prolonged droughts regularly reduced the flow of the West Fork, and the pumping station was without water. Clear Creek had long been considered an important potential water source for Fayetteville. In October 1907, Professor J.J. Koch tested the water supply from Clear Creek and found the water clear and pure; the flow rate was 800,000 gallons per day.[31] At that time, there was no means to connect this source to the city reservoir on Mount Sequoyah. This problem was solved by laying an 8-inch main from Clear Creek to the city distribution system. A steam pump was relocated to Clear Creek, at the site of the present-day Johnson pumping station and filter plant and in 1909 an auxiliary pump was authorized. That year, Superintendent Walter Duggans said there was enough water to supply the town for ten days but after that wells and springs would have to be requisitioned. In the following years lack of an adequate water supply would continue to plague the city. The West Fork pumping station and the Clear Creek emergency pump enabled the city to get through a drought in 1929, the city missing running out of water by one day.

In 1935 it was proposed to create a 30- to 40-acre recreational lake (subsequently 90 acres) between Highway 71 and Johnson Road, on land to be donated by the Lewis brothers. This envisaged construction of a dam across Clear Creek and two roads to provide public access. The project received presidential approval for a federal expenditure of $23,821 in 1936 but was never carried out.

In 1947 an engineer, Max Mehlburger, was employed as a consultant by the city and he advised that improvements to the water supply were needed. At a breakfast meeting in the Blue Moon cafeteria that year, sponsored by the Fayetteville Chamber of Commerce, a project to increase the water supply either by

construction of a dam across Clear Creek, or by running a 20-inch main to the pumping station in Johnson, was presented. A dam committee was formed and in January 1948 at an open forum the chairman, J. K. Gregory, proposed building a road around the lake and provision of home sites that might help pay for the project. A swimming pool could be built between the dam and the highway. These developments did not materialize.

In November 1948, the Fayetteville City Council approved a site north of the city and east of Highway 71 for construction of the dam. An alternative site at Johnson Springs was rejected because of possible sewage overflow from Fayetteville and drainage from Johnson, at such a location the lake would be shallow and have a lower water capacity. A bond for $800,000, part of which was for the reservoir, was proposed and justification for the expenditure presented in an article in the *Northwest Arkansas Times*. The bond issue was approved by electors on November 17, 1948, and the following year negotiations began to purchase the land required.

Rather than start condemnation proceedings, the city bought 641.37 acres from eight landowners for $159,500, at greater cost than originally anticipated. Property holders were (from west to east), M. & M. Cashion (32 acres), S. & E. Dellinger (121 acres), G. & N. Linglebach (22 acres), H. & B. Wilkinson (103.6 acres), A. & N. Williams (81.27 acres), and N. & R. Ivey (41.5 acres). To the north property was purchased from J. McCoy, W. & V. Sanders (162.5 acres), and B. & K. Brogdon (77.5 acres). The farms were said to be on good land that had been improved by the property owners.

The first to sell were the Williamses who received $10,500 for their acreage that included a house and outbuildings south of the present-day Botanical Garden of the Ozarks. Samuel Dellinger sold his 121 acres, which cleared the way for dam construction. Dellinger was one time head of the Zoology Department at the University of Arkansas, and curator of the University Museum. M. Cashion sold the land that includes the present ballpark. Jesse H. McCoy, W.R. Sanders and his wife, Viola, sold the

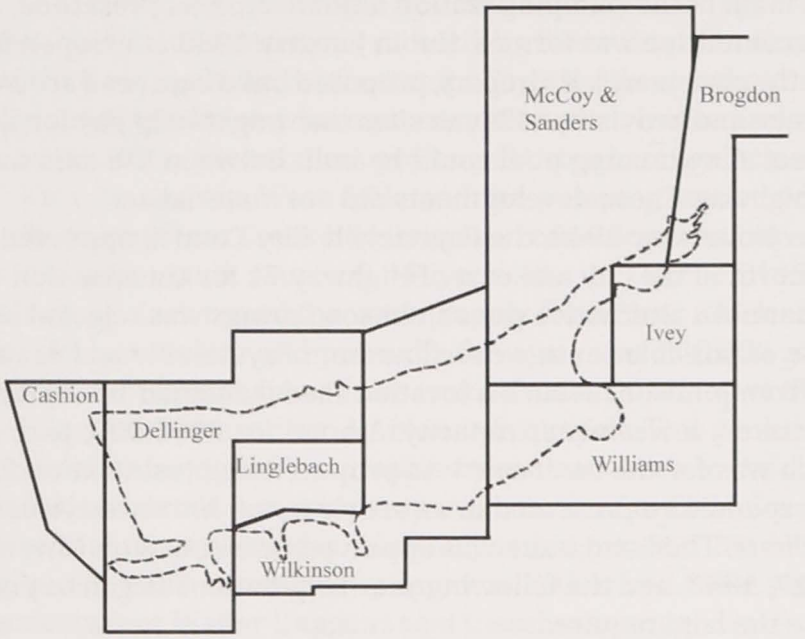


Illustration by Thilak Rathinam

Property owners of land that became Lake Fayetteville Park.

largest landholding that is now part of the lake, the environmental center, and old fields now managed as prairie. The Brogdon property includes the northern section of the Butterfield Trail and the field east of Crossover Road. The Ivey property is currently being developed as a botanical garden; remains of farm buildings can still be seen beside the hard top trail to the north. The city subsequently sold 2 acres to the United Way of Washington County and 1.5 acres to Peace at Home Family Shelter leaving a net acreage of 637.87 for Lake Fayetteville Park. Much of the acreage east of Crossover Road is currently undeveloped.

Evidently, there was some question whether the city had overpaid for the land acquired. In an interview for the *Northwest Arkansas Times* in January 1952 Dellinger contested this point and described his property. In addition to a home there were several out buildings including a spring house, a hen house, and

a grade A milk house all concrete floored with steel roofs. The land was permanent pasture with three acres of irrigated land given over to strawberries. He had a Black Angus herd, swine, and poultry which had to be sold at a loss when the farm was sold to the city. After it became known that the city planned to purchase the lake area he was flooded with offers from speculators who hoped to buy up the land and make a quick profit. On one 20-acre section covered with white oak trees he was offered from $55 to $100 an acre by men who planned to lay out the section in lots thus increasing its value against the time the city took action.

The contract to build the dam was awarded to S.E. Evans Company of Fort Smith for $202,775 on August 8, 1949. Two months later the *Northwest Arkansas Times* published a photograph of the earth embankment under construction and the concrete tower through which water would flow to the city. The dam was closed for filling in early December 1949 and water first started flowing over the spillway following local floods on May 10, 1950. Soon after, regulations governing fishing and boating were adopted, and J. Shackleford was named the first full-time manager. The lake opened for fishing on July 15, 1949, for 50 cents a day.

The history of Fayetteville's water supply and plans for the future were discussed at a meeting of the Exchange Club by L.M. McGoodwin, a consulting engineer who had been involved in yet another survey of the water needs of the city. It had been estimated that over a million dollars would be required to build the dam and provide a pump, filter plant, and transmission lines to Fayetteville. Of the original $800,000 bond issue only $580,000 was available and as a result the filter plant was not built. He recommended that a remote control pump station be installed plus a 16-inch transmission line to Mount Sequoyah. A month later the city approved a second bond issue for $450,000 to finance the water line and the pumping station, and in July 1953 the city began pumping water to the filter plant on Mount Sequoyah.[32] A plan of these water-work improvements dated Jan-

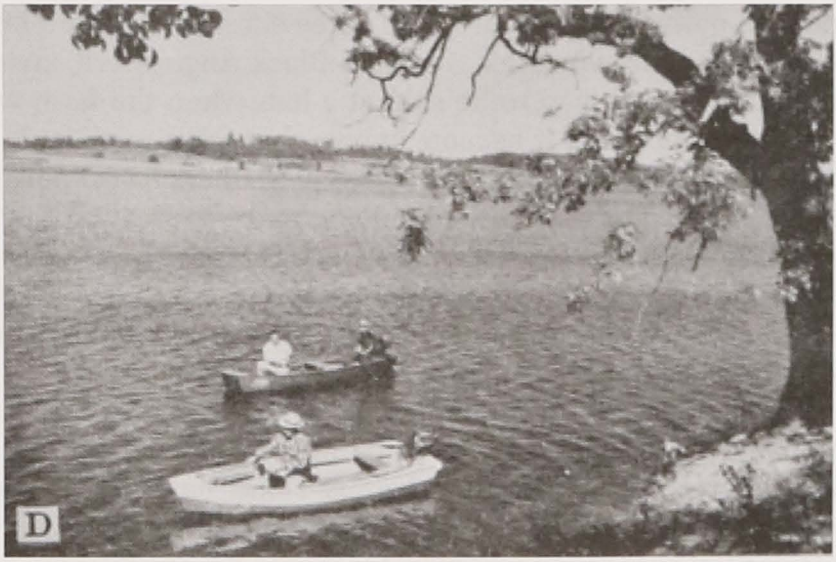


Photo courtesy

An early photo of fishermen on Lake Fayetteville in the 1950s.

uary 1953 shows the 16-inch pipe starting just below the spillway, following Clear Creek a short distance and crossing to the south side where it enters the pump house.[33] It then proceeds in a southerly direction to Mount Sequoyah. An aerial survey photograph dated August 10, 1954, shows a small building downstream from the spillway that may have been the pump house.[34] No trace of this structure remains.

Within a short time it became clear that although Lake Fayetteville was thought to have adequate capacity, the distribution system could not satisfy demand. It was still necessary to depend upon the West Fork of the White River for water.[35] The 1954 aerial survey shows that the lake immediately above the spillway was dry and the low water level had exposed the northern shoreline which was then open pasture with no tree line. In 1955, the superintendent of the city's water department, W.C. Smith, said that the city's use took about half the volume of Lake Fayetteville cutting the lake's level some six and one half feet to

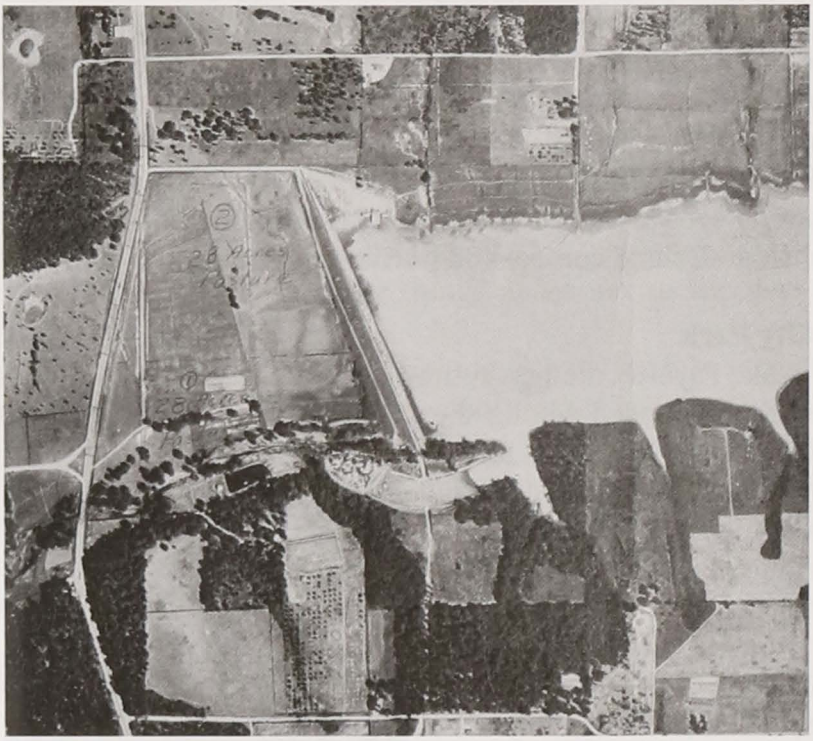


Photo courtesy of Special Collections, University of Arkansas Libraries

An aerial photo, AWE-3N-100, shows the Lake Fayetteville Dam and new spillway in 1954.

seven feet. In November that year the lake was five feet below the spillway. In January 1960, the lake was lowered 2-3 feet by opening valves in the lower part of the tower in order to clean out the water.[36] The water Superintendent Carl Smith explained that the water at the lower level did not move much and when the city started pumping from the lake the water had a stale taste and odor. The following summer when the new source from Lake Sequoyah was available the city planned to clean out three fourths of the supply allowing the lake to refill with fresh water.

Problems with the water supply continued. Thus, in July 1970 Fayetteville was faced with a critical shortage following an

extensive dry spell when only 35 days supply was left in Lake Fayetteville. Fortunately, a solution was at hand because in 1959 the cities of Fayetteville, Springdale, Rogers, and Bentonville had created the Beaver Water District and by 1971 water could be obtained from Beaver Lake. It is interesting to note that a committee had been formed to work toward construction of Beaver Dam as early as 1948 but at that time the main purpose was considered flood control and power generation.[37]

A City Park

Lake Fayetteville was retired as a water source in 1971 and the city proposed selling the property. Samuel Dellinger was chairman of the "Save Lake Fayetteville Committee" and spoke actively in support of its being preserved as a public park.[38]

Special Collections, UA Libraries

Samuel Dellinger

At a meeting of the Women's Civic Club in June 1971 he pointed out that many cities were setting aside natural areas for educational and recreational purposes, that the Lake Fayetteville area was already publicly owned and natural for this type of development. His speech was quoted in the *Northwest Arkansas Times*:

> "We have entirely too many honky-tonks, too much concrete and too much bulldozing. We need something in keeping with the highest aspirations of our people. Fayetteville should adopt the ideal of beauty and education."[39]

A subsequent article pointed out that at a time of steadily

shrinking green space, Fayetteville and Springdale had a never-to-be-repeated opportunity but unfortunately this would cost money:

> "As with most opportunities, there is a catch — to create a lasting and protected park will cost money – money which Fayetteville doesn't have. Such a recreational project calls for camping areas, nature trails, access roads, park rangers, sanitation, water systems and the dozens of other things necessary to success and popularity."[40]

The article showed several photographs of the lake including the original sign listing banned activities that included hunting, picnicking, swimming, and ice skating! The Save Lake Fayetteville Committee prepared petitions, and after a rally and public hearings, the property was transferred from Water and Sewage to the Parks Division. By 1974-1975 its principal use was for recreational fishing and boating.

A Nature Center

Lake Fayetteville Nature Center was founded at the initiative of Tom Jenkins, a biology teacher at Fayetteville High School. Jenkins had been contacted by Frances James, curator of the University of Arkansas Museum, who was concerned that the lake would be sold off for private development. An undated proposal written by Jenkins argued the case for establishment of a Lake Fayetteville Nature Center.[41] This received the support of Harry Vandergriff, superintendent of Fayetteville Public Schools, who wrote:

> "With education being one of the avenues for improving environmental quality, an educational nature center for the public schools and the public in general would benefit all. Also, the establishment of the Lake Fayetteville Nature Center would represent a positive action for environmental education, an example for other areas of the state."

Jack C. Kreie, science coordinator for the Fayetteville Public

Schools, wrote:

> "Considering the urgency of educating youngsters to ecological relationships, we must find a large natural area close to our schools. Population influx is rapidly pushing suitable places out of our reach, by distance and price".

The initial proposal was ambitious and envisaged approximately 300 acres of land encompassing the upper end of the lake. A building was proposed with an observation room, interpretive exhibits, laboratory space, library, and deck combined with a boat dock along the lakeshore.[42]

On April 17, 1973, the Fayetteville Board of Directors passed a resolution that the eastern portion of the lake be reserved in its natural state as a nature study area for at least fifty years. The original grant for the center was obtained as a cooperative effort between Tom Jenkins and Bill Merrifield of Springdale Schools. The center was funded for the first three years with a grant from the U.S. Department of Environmental Education. This grant

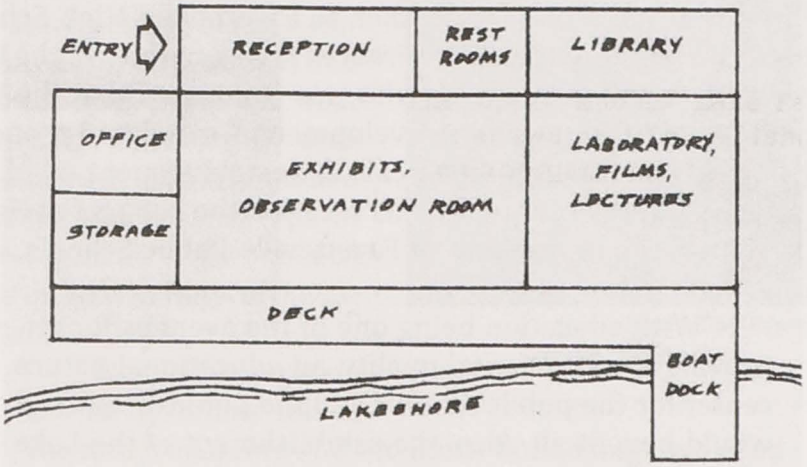
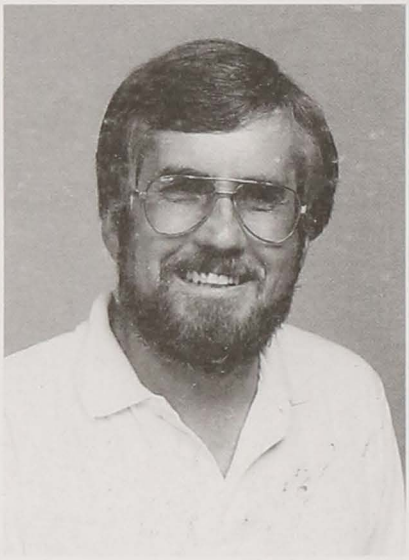


Photo courtesy

An early proposal for an educational center at Lake Fayetteville.

paid for equipment, supplies, and operational salaries. The original purpose of the grant was to educate students in the two cities about the impact of human activity on local water resources. Land management issues, wastewater treatment technologies, and the ecology of fresh water ecosystems were covered. Soon after operations commenced, six Youth Conservation Corps summer camps were sponsored by Fayetteville Public Schools and funded by the Arkansas State Parks Department. Students constructed trails, built observation decks, and participated in environmental education. Funding ceased in 1977 and since then the Fayetteville and Springdale school districts have taken responsibility for running the center. In the entrance lobby a framed certificate signed by Governor Bill Clinton states that the environmental center is a registered Arkansas Natural Area. Thousands of local school children have utilized this resource.



Tom Jenkins

An undated memorandum for Fayetteville Schools set out some of the activities of students in the early days.[43] These included the study of limnology, ecology, water quality, aquatic and sylvan resources, and hydrology. Facilities were available for orienteering and climbing and there was a sensory trail for the visibly impaired, a pier with wheel chair access, and self guided nature trails. Students were involved in planting fir trees around the perimeter of the park and installing nest boxes for wood ducks (colonized by a flying squirrel population). Curricula were available for kindergarten, fifth, eighth, and tenth

The Lake Fayetteville Environmental Center as it appears today.

Photo by H. David Chapman

grade students. Cooperative efforts were undertaken with the University of Arkansas, the Boy Scouts of America, Audubon Societies, the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission, and the Arkansas State Department of Education. Many of these activities continue today.

Use of the land for nature study was not without controversy, the tract of land being described as "an unsightly waste" by one member of the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board. Evidently there were other threats. On behalf of the Fayetteville Public schools the memorandum asks:

> "Will the public trust be preserved? Or will one or a few wealthy people take over parts of the Lake Fayetteville Environmental Center for their personal, private use? The school district requests the reduction of the 1973 resolution to a contractual instrument binding both parties to the terms of the agreement for the stated period of the agreement – fifty years, not fifteen."

As late as 1993, the city of Fayetteville was still considering selling land around Lake Fayetteville and other local parks for development, but thanks to the intervention of the Ozark Society their importance for recreation was recognized (Judith Woltjen, pers. comm.). On the June 20, 1995, Mayor Fred Hanna of Fayetteville signed Ordinance No. 3898, which renewed the 1973 resolution. Thus the eastern portion of Lake Fayetteville is to be maintained in its natural state for fifty years and any structures intended for nature study purposes be preserved and allowed to remain for that period.

A Recreational Complex

In 1979, the Northwest Arkansas Regional Planning Commission classified Lake Fayetteville as a large recreational complex that provides a large area of open space and a natural environment.[44] Its function was to "provide citizens contact with nature and provide an environment in which a larger number of activities may take place." The design "should give special attention to the utilization of natural features" and "take advan-

tage of sites that provide interesting and varied landscapes such as woodland, open meadows, and valleys. Access to vistas and vantage points may be accomplished through paths, roads and hiking and bridle trails." A long list of other features, such as "archery ranges, nature trails, bandstand, golf course, bridle paths, zoo, botanical gardens, museum, and lakes with fishing, boating, and swimming facilities" might be available in such a complex. Some of these features have come to pass but fortunately, some proposals for development (housing on the north shore, selling land to Springdale to build a lift station, a BMX dirt bike track, and RV park) have not occurred.

In recent years the city has extensively developed Lake Fayetteville for recreational purposes. The area west of the dam provides a softball facility that is extensively used during the

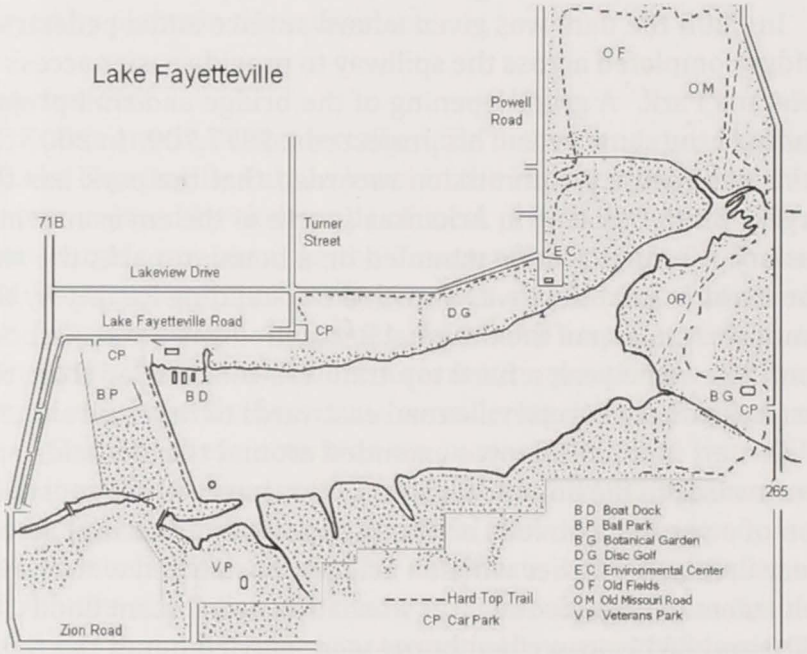


Photo courtesy

A map shows the recreational amenities at Veterans Memorial Park and Lake Fayetteville Park.

summer months. This was constructed in 1975, extended in 1981, and has had numerous improvements since. A new boat dock building was constructed in 1976 and a sand volley ball court in 1983. Veterans Memorial Park was dedicated in 1996 and a pavilion constructed with a grant from Arkansas Department of Parks. In 2000, a flag raising ceremony was held in Veterans Park following a donation of a flag pole from Woodmen of the World. The 18-hole disc golf course at Gulley Park was relocated to the north shore of Lake Fayetteville in 2005. This is immensely popular and used all year round. Informational kiosks were installed at three locations with a grant from the Arkansas Highway and Transportation Department. From 1970 to 2003, $889,408 was spent on improvements to Lake Fayetteville (Parks and Recreation Department). Since then expenditure has continued with major capital improvements including the construction of two iron bridges and the hard top trail.

In 2005 the dam was given a hard surface and a pedestrian bridge completed across the spillway to provide easier access to Veterans Park. A grand opening of the bridge and trail project was held the same year. This project cost $877,709. In 2007 the Arkansas Forestry commission recorded that the park has the largest Black Oak tree in Arkansas (north of the environmental center). A bronze plaque mounted on a boulder marks the site. The Parks Department was awarded Outstanding Facility by the South west region of the National Recreation and Parks Association. The same year, a hard top trail was constructed from the car park at Lake Fayetteville road eastwards to the Environmental Center; in 2009 this was extended around the old fields and southwards to the botanical garden. This involved the construction of a second iron foot bridge (Copperhead Crossing) across Clear Creek. An earlier wooden bridge, constructed with the involvement of Eagle Scouts, was washed away in recent floods. In 2010 and 2011 prescribed burns were carried out in the fields north of the environmental center by private contractors as part of the prairie restoration project. In 2011 the vehicular entrance to Veterans Memorial Park from Zion road was relocated.

A Botanical Garden

Donna Porter was the founder and first director of the Botanical Garden Society of the Ozarks. In September 1977, the Fayetteville City Council approved a 25-year renewable land lease agreement with the society for 98.6 acres of land on the lake's south side. The society was incorporated as a non-profit organization in January 1994, and the lease from the city was renewed in 1997. Donna Porter was also instrumental in producing a Trail Guide for the south shore that identifies many tree species. The second edition of the guide was funded by the Ozark Society Foundation. A Master Plan for the botanical garden was approved by the city in 2003, and the lease agreement revised to give permission to use the site for this purpose for 100 years. A timber framed Horticultural Center, named in honor of Carl Totemeier, was constructed, and various plant collections displayed in order to promote public awareness of the vital role played by plants in the ecosystem.

Conclusions

In this article I have described the history and development of Lake Fayetteville Park, a jewel in the Fayetteville Public Park System enjoyed by thousands of local people and many others from outside our area. As the Fayetteville, Springdale, Rogers, and Bentonville conurbation grows in size the need for parks like Lake Fayetteville becomes ever more important. It is extraordinary how many different recreational activities and functions Lake Fayetteville serves considering its relatively small size. Some of these activities are incompatible and in conflict with its role in preserving a natural environment. The environmental center plays a vital role in allowing young people to make contact with nature. The certificate signed by Governor Bill Clinton states that the site is "A registered Arkansas Natural Area" and that the owner is preserving the property as a significant part of Arkansas natural heritage. Paula Marinoni wrote an article titled "Preserving Lake Fayetteville Park":

"It is imperative that we, as a community and as

a region elevate our sights on what will be preserved for future generations. Will it be possible to preserve land where animals, nature and humans can function in symbiotic harmony, where children and adults can learn to look, linger and listen? We already have such a place at Lake Fayetteville Park."[45]

AUTHOR'S ACKNOWLEDGMENTS: I would like to thank staff at the Special Collections Department of the Mullins Library, University of Arkansas, the Washington County Archives, and the County Clerk's Office for providing access to early records and maps of the Lake Fayetteville area. I would also like to Jill Goddard of the city of Fayetteville engineering department; David Jurgens, utility director; Connie Edmontson, parks and recreation director; Duane and Judith Woltjen, and Tom Jenkins for useful discussions, and Thilak Rathinam for preparing the Plat map illustrations.

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Southern Memorial Association Receives Deed to Walker Cemetery

At the top of Rock Street, among the huge trees that cover Mount Sequoyah, is the final resting place of one of Fayetteville's founding families, the Walker family. Because of the historical significance of this small burial ground, the descendents have decided to pass on ownership of this hallowed ground and entrust its care and restoration to the Southern Memorial Association of Washington County.

The Southern Memorial Association of Washington County was founded by about 40 Fayetteville women in 1872 and is the oldest non-profit, continuous organization founded by women in the state of Arkansas. In 1873, the association purchased property from the Walker family in order to establish the Confederate Cemetery, just across the lane from the Walker Cemetery. For over 138 years area women have worked tirelessly to provide a beautiful resting place for more than 600 Confederate soldiers whose remains lie in this now historic cemetery. It was the women of the Southern Memorial Association who organized the removal of the bodies of the soldiers from mass graves at the battlegrounds of Prairie Grove, Pea Ridge and the Battle of Fayetteville as well as from the roadsides and the woodlands where they fell and then their re-interment in the Confederate Cemetery. Most of the soldiers reinterred in the cemetery remain unknown, but the founding ladies did record the names of 121 men whose bodies rest in the cemetery that they worked so hard to obtain.

Buried in the historic Walker Cemetery is David Walker. He was born in 1806 in Kentucky. It is he who has left the largest imprint on the history and development of Fayetteville, Washington County, and the state of Arkansas. Walker first came to Fayetteville in 1830 with very little but grit and determination, but used them both with such fortunate results that in 1833 he

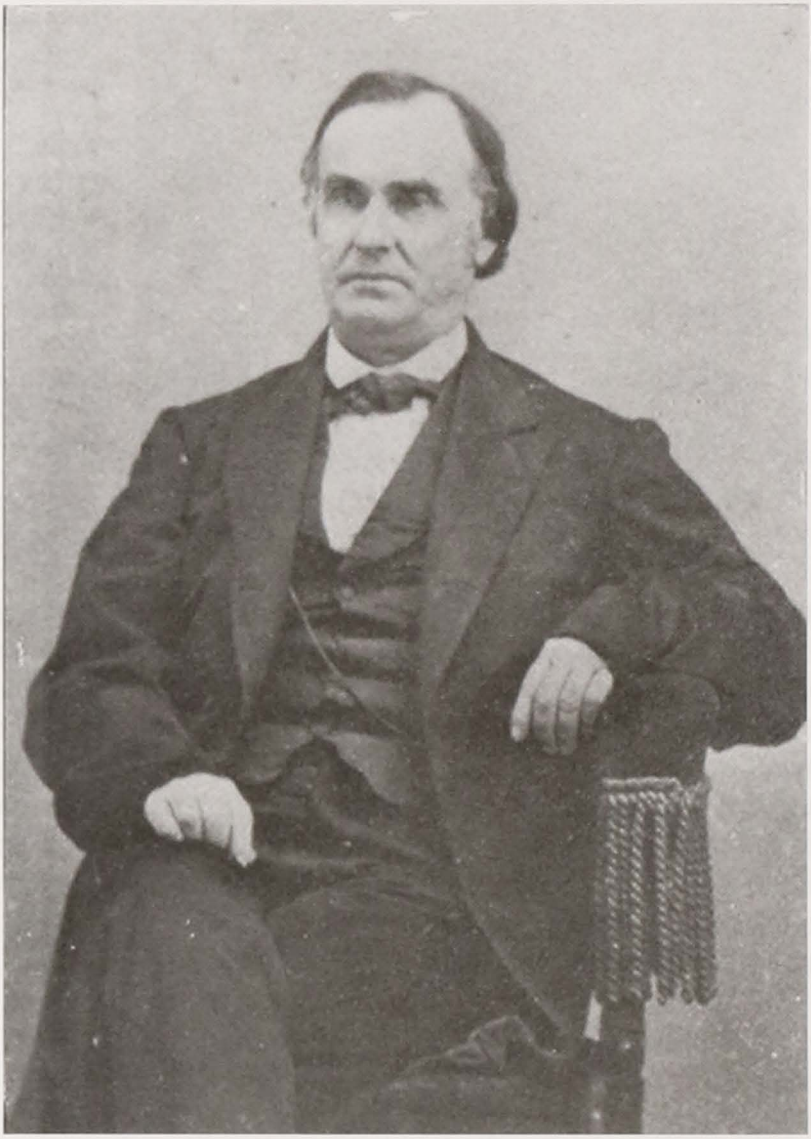
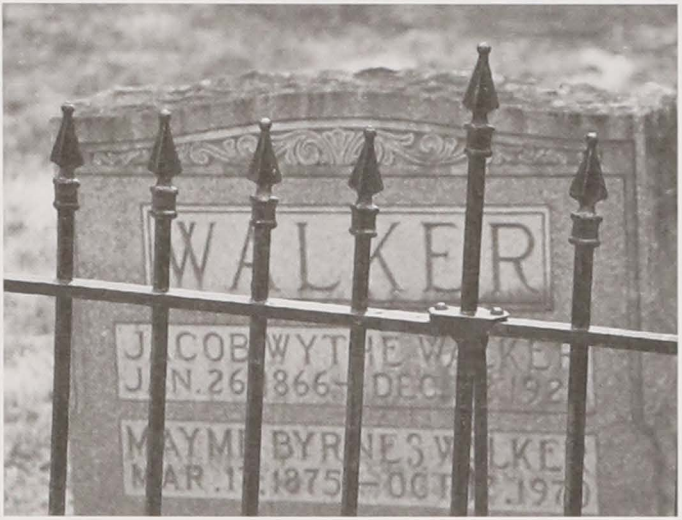


Photo courtesy

Judge David Walker immigrated to Washington County in 1830 and established a law practice, political career and civic life unequaled in the region. He served three terms on the Arkansas Supreme Court, including one as the chief justice; chaired the state's convention on secession; and helped lead the bid to secure the University of Arkansas for Fayetteville.



The headstone of Jacob Wythe Walker and Mayme Byrnes Walker in the Walker Cemetery.

Photo courtesy of the Southern Memorial Association

returned briefly to Kentucky to marry Jane Lewis Washington, the granddaughter of President George Washington's first cousin, Warner Washington.

David and Jane Walker settled down in Fayetteville, where they proceeded to raise six children. His law practice grew quickly because he was a man that people instinctively trusted. Jane's mother, Rebecca Smith Washington, like David's parents, immigrated to Arkansas from Kentucky in 1836. These family members lie buried with their kinsmen within the grounds of the Walker Cemetery.

David Walker was a member of Arkansas' first constitutional convention. He was an Arkansas State Senator in 1840. He became a member of the Arkansas Supreme Court three times, twice serving as Associate Justice and once as Chief Justice. In 1861 Judge David Walker was a pro-Union delegate to the State Convention that met to decide whether to secede from the Union or not. He was chosen president of that convention, and fought for the preservation of the Union up to the last hopeless hour. He gave in to the inevitable and offered his services to the new Confederacy. He was commissioned a colonel in the Confeder-

ate Army, serving in south Arkansas as a judge of the military court in General Sterling Price's army.

After the ravages of the Civil War, Judge Walker managed to rebuild most of his business and legal affairs. He, like many, lost much during the war, including a son. He was a member of the Building Committee to secure the University of Arkansas for Fayetteville in 1871. He was the spokesman for Arkansas at the 1876 centennial of the United States of America, which was held in Philadelphia. It can be said that Fayetteville owes much of its importance in early state circles to Judge David Walker, who epitomized public-spirited leadership, judicial wisdom, and life-long respect for education.

To quote Walter J. Lemke, founder of the Washington County Historical Society and the first chair of the journalism department at the University of Arkansas: "His influence on our state's development far transcends that of many of the politicians, soldiers, and others who are featured in Arkansas school histories. ... He gained fame and fortune for himself and a better life for his fellow-citizens."

David Walker lived to be 73 years old and died in 1879. His monument is the largest in the Walker Cemetery. Also buried there are two of the founding ladies of the Southern Memorial Association, David Walker's daughter, Mary Walker and her daughter, Miss Sue Walker.

The Southern Memorial Association accepted the deed of ownership to the Walker Cemetery property on August 6, 2011, during a brief public ceremony.

The Southern Memorial Association's purpose has always been to maintain a beautiful resting place for the Confederate dead. In acquiring the Walker Cemetery, the association said in a media release, their purpose will also be the same, to maintain a beautiful resting place for the Walker family members.

The Southern Memorial Association receives no public funding and has never had financial support from any foundations or endowments during in its history. It continues to exist only by its membership dues and gracious donations from individuals.

An 1873 Article About the Confederate Cemetery

EDITOR'S NOTE: The following article was reprinted from the Fayetteville Democrat in the Daily Arkansas Gazette *on Dec. 28, 1873. It appeared in Columns 3 and 4 of Page 2. J.D. Henry was a farmer. He and his wife, Lucy, had one son, J.S., by 1873.*

THE STATE AT LARGE.

News from the Counties—Our Correspondence, and Gleanings from the State Press.

WASHINGTON.

The *Fayetteville Democrat* of the 24th has these items:

The work of gathering up the confederate dead scattered throughout the county, and interring them in the confederate cemetery on the hill east of town, is now going on under the supervision of Mr. J.D. Henry. About one hundred and fifty bodies have been exhumed and placed in their last resting place. Less than one year ago the ladies of Fayetteville organized a "Southern Memorial association" for the purpose of accomplishing this noble work, and they have purchased a beautiful lot of four acres, one-fourth mile east of town, which has been enclosed with a nice fence, and the work of ornamenting and beautifying it will soon be commenced. God bless the noble women engaged in this work. Let all remember that the cemetery will be dedicated on the 10th of June. All are invited to come and bring flowers and refreshments. We hope our friends throughout the county will turn out and take part in these ceremonies. Let us pay tribute to those gallant heroes who fell for us.

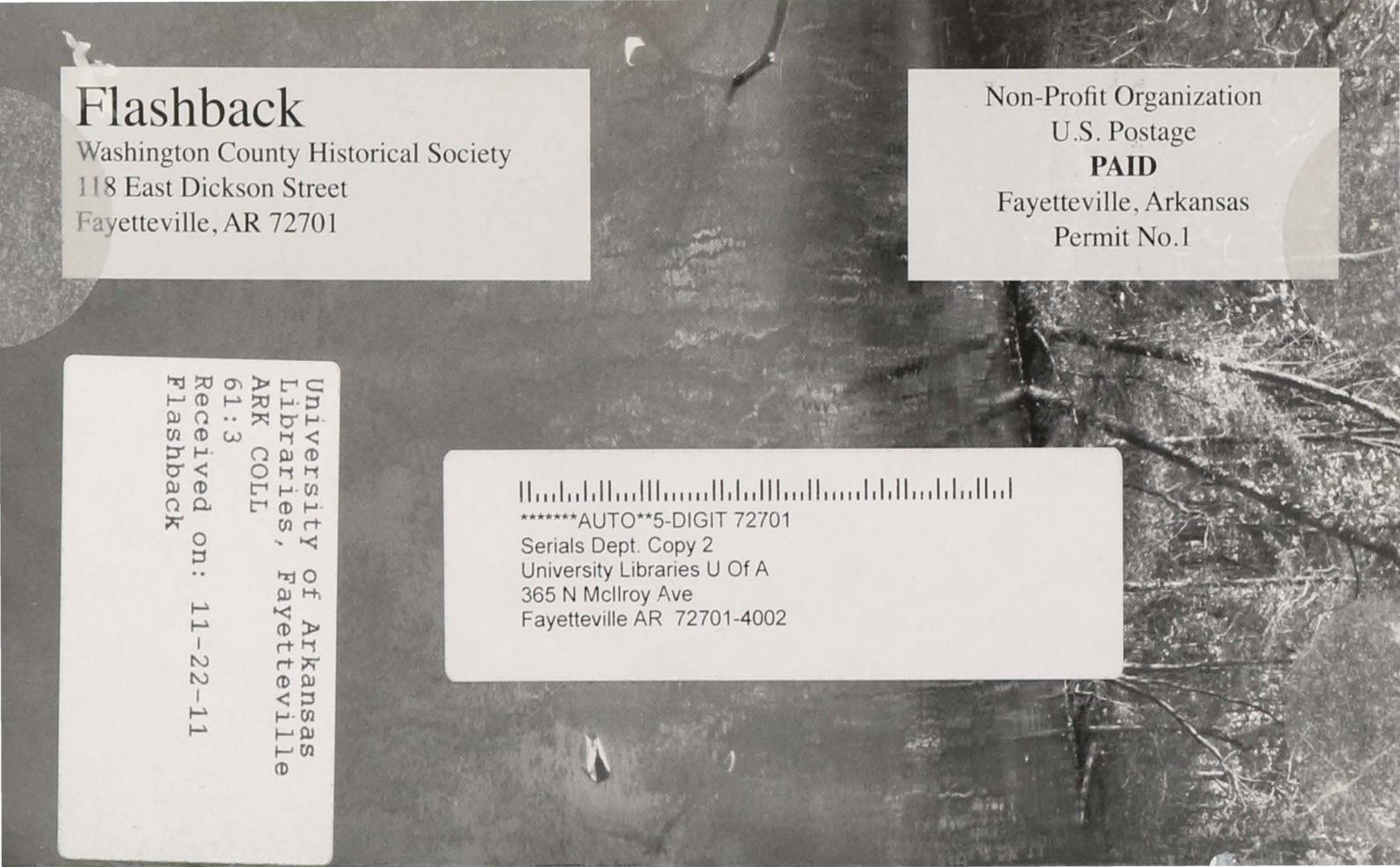
Planned Gifts

Making charitable gifts to the Washington County Historical Society will enable it to continue and expand its programs.

If you are making regular gifts to the Washington County Historical Society or would like to start, you may find it beneficial to set up or give:

1. A **charitable lead trust** that will pay income to WCHS for a set period.
2. A **charitable remainder trust** that will allow you to transfer property to a trust set up for WCHS without paying capital gains tax on the sale of the property.
3. **Appreciated securities** at their current value and take an income tax deduction for the year up to 30 percent of adjusted gross income.
4. **Gifts from your retirement account** that could be an integral part of planning for those withdrawals.
5. An **irrevocable life insurance trust** that could own your life insurance, when it no longer serves its purpose, to make a charitable gift that could reduce the estate's tax bill.

There are a number of ways to enhance your retirement plans while still providing for your charitable interests and making gifts you never dreamed possible. Consult with your financial adviser on other ways you can make charitable donations. These planned gifts will provide added tax benefits for you and your heir while helping to support the vital mission of the Washington County Historical Society for years to come.



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